GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4033
ANSWERED ON:20.08.2001
MUMBAI CELLULAR OPERATORS
GANGASANDRA SIDDAPPA BASAVARAJ;GOWDAR MALLIKARJUNAPPA

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mumbai cellular operators have launched an extremely aggressive tariff plan;

(b) if so, the detail thereof;

(c) whether the Delhi operators are not keen to follow the said scheme;

(d) the extent of tariff rates of cellular telephones are different in Delhi from Mumbai;

(e) whether the Government have urged the Delhi cellular operators to follow the said scheme; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Delhi cellular operators thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR)

(a) to (f): Cellular mobile tariff are specified by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in its Telecommunication Tariff Order (TTO), 1999. These tariffs are for standard tariff package, which must always be offered to the subscribers by the service providers. The standard tariff package offered by the service providers in identical in all Metro Service Areas including Mumbai and Delhi.

In addition to the standard package, the service providers are free to offer alternative tariff package subject to approval of the Authority. Each operator offers a number of alternative packages comprising different rates of rental and airtime charges. The subscriber may choose from amongst the different tariff packages on offer, including the standard tariff package.

In the recent past, there has been an overall reduction in the cellular tariff prevailing to various service areas including Mumbai and Delhi. As an example, the main features of few alternative tariff plans with low airtime rate offered by cellular operators in Mumbai and Delhi are given below:

	BPL Mobile Mumbai Hmax, Mumbai	Bharti Cellular, Delhi	Sterling Cellular, Delhi
Monthly Rental	Rs. 395	Rs. 395	Rs. 400	Rs. 395
Airtime Out Going (per min.)	Rs. 1/-	Rs. 1/-	Rs. 1.48	Rs. 1.48
Airtime incoming (per min.)	Nil	Nil	Rs. 1.48	Rs. 1.48
Monthly Commitment	Rs. 1999	Rs. 1995	Rs. 800	Rs. 795

It would be seen from the above table that in Mumbai the monthly minimum commitment charge is higher as compared to the alternative tariff plan available in Delhi. Thus, in a tariff plan, which comprises more than one element of charge, viz., rental, airtime and other features such as monthly minimum commitment charge, a comparison between different tariff plans is difficult and may be misleading.

Further, it is not mandatory for any service provider in a particular service area to adopt alternative plans that may be available in other areas of the country. As mentioned above, all service providers are free to offer, in addition to the standard package, any number of alternative tariff plans that may be suitable for different category of subscribers, subject to approval of he TRAI.